

Boston, October 5. 1856.

Dear Mr Webb -

Do not be alarmed by this great, formal looking sheet, which is taken because it lies handy. I am your debtor for a letter, and tho' I have little or nothing wherein to pay you, I venture upon an attempt at a discharge <sup>a portion of</sup> of the debt. - I rec<sup>d</sup>. y<sup>r</sup>. of 22<sup>d</sup> Aug. (via New York) on the 5<sup>th</sup> of Sept<sup>r</sup>, the day after my return from an absence of a month, during which time I was both busily & pleasantly occupied in preaching our radical anti-slavery doctrines, chiefly in Pennsylvania, but attending also the Annual Ohio Meeting, an important gathering of a very excellent & reliable set of people. Having a few spare days between my Pennsylvania engagement & the Ohio Meeting, I improved them by a rapid ride through the great State of Ohio (looking its worst on acc<sup>t</sup> of the long prevalence of very hot and very dry weather) - to its chief city, & the chief city of the Continent West of the Alleghany Mts., Cincinnati. . . This city has now some 200,000 inhabitants, though founded in my life-time. I was disappointed in it - in respects of cleanliness, of the <sup>appearance</sup> ~~character~~ of its inhabitants, of the prevalent taste in architecture &c., &c. There was a general appearance of a lack of refinement and culture - a gross and coarse look to the streets, the buildings, & the great bulk of the people. I crossed the Ohio, now contracted by the long & severe drought to a small stream, into Kentucky, walked the streets of Newport (a small, poor town, with the tall weeds & grass starting up in its dull streets) & went to see the family of the heroic Bailey, the Editor of the Kentucky News. He was not at home, not having returned as yet from his Eastern tour, but I saw the Wife & the numerous girls and boys, bright, intelligent, and hopeful-looking young folks. I could not but admire the spirit of devotion which seemed to fire their young bosoms, and which led them to take so joyfully the spoiling of their goods, & all the indignities which have been heaped upon them, - the end of which I fear is not yet. They are however of a good courage, and will not suffer the flag of freedom which they have raised in



Kentucky soil to be easily beaten down. I see that in the September Advocate you give an extract of mine respecting friend Bailey. — I think him a very honest, brave, & truly anti-slavery person; but, in his position, he has to modify & qualify his language very much, and refrain from everything which can be construed into incendiarism. (Nothing of the above will bear going into the Advocate.)

I see you have fixed the 22<sup>d</sup> Octo. as the latest period for receiving contributions to be forwarded to the Anti-Slavery Bazaar. I am very glad of that. That is full late for whatever is to come by sailing vessels. May I ask that the De la Rue box (if I may venture to take for granted that there will be one) may not be hazardedly delayed this year, and if necessarily late may be sent by Steamship? But I think you will not forget our narrow escape, last year, from an entire deprivation of its valuable <sup>help.</sup> services. In sending future pamphlets from here, I will endeavour to remember your suggestions about writing any address upon them; and will avoid it where I can do so. I design soon to send you a small parcel of the little volume <sup>which</sup> the American Anti-Slavery Society has just stereotyped & published, "The United States Constitution and Its Proslavery Compromises." Some of these, at least, I shall greatly desire to address. The book, which is a 12mo., pp. 200, is a republication of the thick pamphlet, published many years since, entitled "The Constitution a Pro-Slavery Document, being Selections from the Madison Papers" etc. etc. Wendell Phillips's name now appears on the title-page, & 20 pages of new matter have been added. We have also issued a new tract, by C. K. Whipple, of which I mean to forward a parcel to you.

I have recently had a note from Anne Weston. She was travelling in Switzerland, was surprised to find how strong she was, & how well she could bear the excursions to the mountains & glaciers. Lucia seemed to be invigorated & made better by the m<sup>tn</sup> air. A.W.W. said her plans were to return to America



"early next summer". All the rest, I conjecture, will remain in Europe. I think it most probable that M<sup>rs</sup>. Chapman will rejoin her sisters and daughters soon after Anne's return. By the way Mrs. Chapman (to whom I showed recently some of your letters) begged me to give her sincere regards to you. - I hope E. Quincy is giving you occasionally a letter. He is quite a busy man with his pen now. Under the signature of Byles, he corresponds with the New York Tribune, and before its quarter of a million of subscribers (and probably thrice that number of readers) flourishes his keen satirical blade and scatters his crumbs of humour and wisdom. We see rather less of him than usual, of late, I think; - or, this may be owing to my own more frequent absence from the City. - Speaking of letters, I must criticise a little yours in the "Standard" of Sept. 2<sup>d</sup>. I thought <sup>on reading it</sup> you had got quite out of your reckoning! Who the American was who had temporary power to almost deceive one of the very elect, I know not; but [the argument that we are not to prep. Disunion, because the vast majority of the people deem it impracticable and impossible, would have been equally good against establishing the Liberator in 1830; ~~against~~ against forming the American Anti-Sl. Society in 1833; against Clarkson's determined effort to get a decree [from Lord Mansfield] from the British Nation against the Slave Trade, - & finally, against almost every good & righteous work ever conceived & set on foot by men. This is one part, & a great part, of our work - to convince the heart-hardened, stiff-necked, self-glorifying American people that a Dissolution of the Union with Slaveholders, Slave-breeders, Slave traders, is perfectly practicable, as every great act of Right must be, and that it is their imperative duty to bring it about. Their prejudices are very strong & very deep, we know; but prejudices will give way in honest minds, and there is a large element of good sense and of honesty still existing in the American character, which will cause them to repent of and annul their complicity with the Slaveholder as soon as they see it in its true light. The attachment to the Union now is nothing less than idolatry. It involves and necessitates the



Systematic

most extensive overthrow of the laws & commands of God ever attempted by any nation professing to be civilized, and the setting up in their place of an idol more hideous, bloody, & cruel than the world has ever seen in the most darkened & heathenish lands. This is no fiction. It is no figure of speech. It is the literal, simple truth. Look at the Slave laws, the slave-usages, the slavery despotism, aggression, usurpation. Witness its destructive work to body, mind, & morals. Witness the political and ecclesiastical union which the North now has with these high-handed robbers, these unconscionable tyrants, these cold-blooded murderers; these wicked men who doom their victims to a life of enforced impurity, adultery, & ~~debauchery~~ of all imaginable moral depravation. Are we to be silent about such a Union, because the Northern people are now so besotted and blind as to think ~~such~~ <sup>this</sup> a union necessary? because they think to break its criminal bonds is impracticable? No man or body of men can ever tie themselves up to any such necessity. The Union is now the sole strength, the only preservative power, of Slavery. By its means, Slavery flourishes, it strong, & spreads itself South & North, and will eventually swallow up the whole country, the Union continue, or else fill the land with the bitterest war of extermination. By means of the National treasury, full to overflowing, & filled 5 parts in 6 by the North by means of the Army & Navy, manned, equipped, & subsisted & paid almost wholly by the North, the Slave Power is supplied with abundant means of prosecuting its ~~infernal~~ designs; and the obligations of the Union tie up the Northern people and paralyze their strength. Take away <sup>these obligations - take away</sup> these vast largesses & helps to Slavery, take away <sup>from Slavery</sup> the immense power which the U. S. Const<sup>n</sup> gives it in the halls of Congress, take away the great moral force it derives from the fact that now every Northern bayonet pledged to subdue the rebellious slave to his Slavery again, - let the Northern people cease to be participes criminis, partakers of the Sin of the Enslavement of Four Millions of Men; and it is just as physically, morally, & philosophically certain that Slavery will die, as it is that a heavy weight will come to the ground when the ~~force~~ <sup>cord</sup> which holds it suspended in air is ~~cut~~ <sup>snapped</sup>. There would be no question of the ~~Mississippi~~ <sup>fasting - hanging of the</sup> if the Southern States would be <sup>very much</sup> ~~tenfold~~ the greater sufferers from any obstruction to its navigation and Commerce. <sup>Have</sup> ~~Do not~~ England & our Slaveholding States ~~have~~ <sup>not</sup> a most intimate commercial ~~connection~~ <sup>connection</sup> without any governmental ~~connection~~ <sup>union?</sup> Could not the North have equally, all she desired of this, after Separation as before? Most certainly. The South will destroy itself, out of spite to the North. - But, what have we to anticipate from a



continuance of the Union? In my judgment, one of these two conditions, viz. A constant state of war and bloodshed, growing out of feelings continually more and more exasperated, on both sides, — making the <sup>nation</sup> ~~country~~ a great burlesque & mockery of the name of Union; or a doleful, craven submission on the part of the North to <sup>the already insufferable</sup> demands of the South, <sup>which must</sup> ~~and growing~~ more numerous, and more oppressive and insulting with every new success. Between Slavery & Freedom there can be no union, — mark that! It is an attempt to harmonize, <sup>and join together</sup> what God and Nature have made forever antagonistic & mutually repellent. Such an attempt is like that of laying a live coal in a magazine of gunpowder, with the expectation that both <sup>will continue together</sup> ~~would remain~~ in peace & harmony. We have tried, already far too long, the perilous, the criminal experiment. There is no other remedy! There never <sup>& there never will be</sup> was any other way to remove a wrong & its bitter consequences, but to repent of it, to cease to do the evil, to forsake it and whatever goes to strengthen & perpetuate it. It is now for the North to say whether she will continue <sup>to be</sup> the fostering mother of Slavery, & <sup>to</sup> labour for a ~~nominal~~ and impossible Union, or ~~will stand forth~~ whether she will cease from this greatest of all possible sins, and suffer the down-trodden slave to <sup>and stand upon his feet</sup> rise, & become a Man. — I am very sure of one thing — that no considerations of the difficulty of the work will deter the American Anti-Slavery Society from continually demanding of this people that they break every yoke and let the oppressed go free, — and, as a necessary step to that end, that they be no longer themselves partakers of the sin, & no longer have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. —

In a recent letter you suggested a visit to England from Wendell Phillips. For ~~the~~ sake of our good cause, for his own sake, & that of many who know & honour & love him in Europe, I wish the thing were possible; but I suppose it is hardly within the bounds of possibility, situated as he now



is, with reference <sup>to</sup> the health of Mr. Phillips, who is I fear a confirmed invalid, <sup>and</sup> seldom ~~abandons~~ moves from her chamber. He <sup>seldom</sup> ~~never~~ goes very far from home - never beyond the reach of the telegraph to bring him back in a day, or two at farthest. - I hope Mrs. Stowe may do much good by her present visit to Gt. Britain. How freely, & how sarcastically she has spoken, <sup>in "Dred"</sup> again & again, her opinion of what religion is, & of what it is not, and of the sad mockery of all <sup>true</sup> religion so extensively displayed in the American Church of all denominations. I sh<sup>d</sup>. think it would be exceedingly disagreeable to the pious Scotch, who took her up so warmly, and would put those eminent defenders of the faith, the New Glasgow association, to their wit's end to defend her!

In 4 weeks from tomorrow will come the Presidential Election. The nation is completely absorbed by it. It is very generally conceded now that nothing can prevent Col. Fremont's election but a coalition between the Democratic & Know-Nothing parties, hitherto open and bitter enemies <sup>to each other.</sup> - a coalition between the Catholic and ~~the~~ foes of the Catholic, between the foreigner & those who hate him & have created a great party in order to crush him. Such a coalition seems impossible. But it is being attempted now; and either Mr. Buchanan or Mr. Fillmore will be called upon to withdraw, in order that Slavery may not be balked <sup>of</sup> its triumph. - There are, alas! only too many signs that, if Col. Fremont succeeds, his administration will be one of pro-slavery compromises, a continual mortification, sorrow, & reproach to those antislavery people who have toiled so hard, & stretched their consciences so far, to secure his elevation. - American Politics is a most deceitful & desperately wicked game. Vide, N. P. Banks's speech to the New York Merchants. Mr. B. is Speaker of the Natl. Ho. of Representatives, one of the most important & influential posts in the Government. You will observe he says that if Col. Fremont is elected, the question of Freedom or Slavery will no longer agitate the land, - but it will be the Pacific Rail Road (!!) and the trade of the Pacific Ocean! Alas for him. He is deceiving somebody most grossly. We shall soon see who.

P.S. I would send you the account you ask for, but find my book is at Leicester. I will remember it

I am, Dear Mr. Webb, Most Sincerely Yours

Samuel May, Jr.